

1 3.1 AESTHETICS

AESTHETICS – Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2 3.1.1 Environmental Setting

3 The GP Gypsum Antioch Wharf (wharf/ship terminal) is situated on approximately 1.4
4 acres adjacent to the southern shore of the San Joaquin River (River), approximately 2
5 miles west of the Senator John A. Nejedly Bridge (Antioch Bridge), in the city of Antioch,
6 Contra Costa County. Two units of the Antioch Dunes National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge)
7 are located to the east and west of the GP Antioch gypsum fiberboard manufacturing
8 Plant (Plant) near the wharf but on the shore; and West Island is across the main
9 channel of the River, to the north of the wharf. Other industrial uses are spread along
10 the shoreline to the north and south. The nearest residences lie about 1,800 feet to the
11 south of the wharf and the nearest school is about 0.9 mile from the Project site.

12 Boaters, fishermen, and other members of the public traveling on the River between the
13 wharf and West Island would be able to see the wharf, as would motorists traveling over
14 the Antioch Bridge. The occasional ship visits and wharf unloading activities on the
15 wharf are common views for these members of the public. Similarly, members of the
16 public passing by the Plant traveling on Wilbur Avenue can view both the wharf and the
17 River. Representative photographs of the wharf and associated structures are provided
18 in Figures 3.1-1 and 3.1-2.



View of upstream shoreline from east section of wharf



View of shoreline on east side of walkway

Figure 3.1-1
Photos of the Eastern Side of the Site

Source: Wood Biological Consulting, Inc.



View of shoreline on west side of walkway



View of shoreline across from west section of wharf

Figure 3.1-2

Photos of the Western Side of the Site

Source: Wood Biological Consulting, Inc.

3.1.2 Regulatory Setting

Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to this issue area and relevant to the Project are identified in Table 3.1-1.

Table 3.1-1. Laws, Regulations, and Policies (Aesthetics)

CA	California Scenic Highway Program	The California Scenic Highway Program, managed by the California Department of Transportation, was created to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. State highways identified as scenic, or eligible for designation, are listed in California Streets and Highways Code section 260 et seq.
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Local goals, policies, and/or regulations applicable to this issue area are listed below. The Project site is within an area of Contra Costa County that was annexed by the city of Antioch in 2013; however, Contra Costa County information is also provided for context.

- City of Antioch lists preserving scenic views of the River from areas accessible to the public as an important resource in the city of Antioch's General Plan, Open Space Element, Section 10.3 (adopted November 24, 2003).
- Contra Costa County has designated the River as a scenic waterway in Section 9.6 of the County 2005-2020 General Plan (adopted January 18, 2005).

Additionally, State Route 160, including the Antioch Bridge, though not officially designated, is listed as an Eligible State Scenic Highway by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).⁹

3.1.3 Impact Analysis

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less Than Significant Impact. Scenic vistas include areas with views of the River, including the Antioch Bridge and sites across the River. During Project activities, there would be short-term, temporary impacts to views of the scenic waterway. However, because barges and tugboats are already common sights in this area of the River, and all Project-related vessels, equipment and other materials would be removed at the Project completion, presence of this equipment during the approximately 8 weeks of construction would not create an adverse impact. After Project completion, views from publicly accessible viewpoints along the River would remain similar to existing conditions.

⁹ www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/

As stated above, preserving publicly accessible scenic views of the River is listed in the Antioch General Plan. Consistent with the Antioch General Plan goals, completing the proposed Project would improve these views by:

- Creating slightly more open water in the areas of existing walkways;
- Creating slightly more pier-related development nearer to the shore; and
- Reducing the number of deteriorated wooden pilings associated with the dolphins proposed to be removed.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No Impact. While State Route 160 is listed as “eligible” by Caltrans, no officially designated Federal, State or local scenic highway corridors are located in, or are visible from, the Project site. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on scenic resources including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway corridor.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

No Impact. As noted in the responses to items **a)** and **b)** above, the Project would not substantially alter the Project site’s existing visual quality. The visual character is expected to be improved as compared to the existing wharf, would include slightly more open water (in the areas of the existing walkways), and would concentrate pier-related development nearer to the shore. In addition, the result of the Project would be consistent with the Contra Costa County’s General Plan, Scenic Resource Policy 9-27, which promotes the removal of negative features from scenic areas (e.g., removal of the deteriorated portions of the existing wharf).

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

No Impact. No new source of visual glare or substantial light is expected to occur due to the Project. Because removal activities would occur during daylight hours, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) does not require any additional substantial lighting. Presence of marine vessels, temporary facilities, and equipment would be short-term and completely removed at Project completion. Therefore, there would be no new impact on visual glare or light.

3.1.4 Mitigation Summary

The Project would not result in significant impacts to Aesthetics; therefore, no mitigation is required.